Three Bids May Not Be Necessary for Conference Facilities

Effective April 1, 2005, it will no longer be necessary to get three bids for conference facilities if agencies use a site on the State Travel Office's list of facilities approved for group gatherings. The State Travel Office has contacted hotels across the state that provide conference facilities and has compiled a list of facilities that accept state per diem rates for meals and lodging.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Agencies should consult this list when planning a conference and select a location from those listed. The list is available on the Division of Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov. Select *State Travel*, *Hotels/Group Facilities*. Cities are listed in alphabetical order along with the address, the name and telephone number of the contact person, the size of group that can be accommodated, and special conditions such as free parking.

Because the conference facility list will be revised frequently, we recommend that you use the list on-line instead of printing it. To search the list, select the icon of the binoculars in the Adobe Acrobat Reader toolbar just above the list, and type in the name of a city or a specific hotel to go right to that information.

In addition to selecting a facility on the conference facility list, agencies still need to complete a form FI 58, State of Utah Travel Quotation Bid Sheet, and have departmental approval. Agencies may contact the hotel and make **tentative** arrangements. The State Travel Office will review the FI 58 and a **draft** contract, identify any inappropriate charges, and assist with any negotiations necessary at this point. If agencies need assistance making a selection, contact State Travel Coordinator Tami Nelson in the State Travel Office.

Remember, do not sign a contract until acceptable arrangements have been made and you have received approval from the State Travel Office. The agency will then hold the conference and pay the bills. All payments on the conference should reference the State Travel Office approval number in the document description. The Division of Finance auditors will audit these payments to determine compliance with policy requirements.

The FI 58 form is being revised to reflect this change in policy. The new version, which will be renamed Group Gathering Authorization, will not be ready by April 1, so agencies should continue to use the old form until the new version is available. Finance forms are available at www.finance.utah.gov/forms.

The policy requiring only one bid for conference facilities on our list will be documented in State Accounting Policy FIACCT 04-11.00, Purchasing – Group Gatherings, which will be available on our Web site April 4. The Group Gathering policy has also been revised to address all group gatherings in one policy, rather than addressing each separate type of group event in a separate policy.

If you have questions about group events or need assistance selecting a facility, contact Tami Nelson at 801-538-3109 or taminelson@utah.gov. ✦

B&A Meeting Handouts Are Available on Our Web Site

Copies of materials distributed at the March 24 Budget and Accounting Officers meeting are available on the Division of Finance Web site. You can access the handouts from www.finance.utah.gov/new/index.htm.

Materials posted on the Web are listed below:

✓ Agenda and Handout (Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat files)

✓ Agency Year-end Calendar (Microsoft Excel file)

✓ Department of Administrative Services – DAS Coding Block Mass Change (Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat files)

In addition, when the Budget Builder On-Line Application and the Budget Builder instructions are available you will be able to access them from the same Web address.

The new Budget Builder On-Line Application, which should be available some time the week of April 4, will replace the Microsoft Access Budget Builder agencies have used in the past. The on-line application will offer functionality similar to the Access version distributed to agencies on CD in previous years.

When the Budget Builder On-Line Application is available, Finance will send a message through the FINET list server and will directly contact budget and accounting officers involved in the budget setup. At that time we will notify agencies of revised deadlines for setting up new org structures and for setting up Revenue and Expense budgets. All other deadlines will be the same as those listed in the handouts from the Budget and Accounting Officers meeting.

If you have questions about the deadlines, contact Jason Nielsen at 801-537-9263 or jnielsen@utah.gov. ✤

Help Us Define the State's Financial Reporting Entity

We need your assistance to ensure that we have identified all organizations or entities that qualify as part of the financial reporting entity of the State. These entities are the organizations for which the State is financially accountable.

The State is financially accountable for organizations that are legally part of the State. The State is also financially accountable for a legally separate organization if the State appoints a majority of an organization's governing body and **either** the State is able to impose its will on that organization **or** there is a potential for the organization to provide specific financial benefits to, or to impose specific financial burdens on the State. The State may also be financially accountable for an organization that is financially dependent on the State.

If you identify an organization that you believe qualifies as part of the financial reporting entity of the State and it is either a new entity or you believe we are not aware of it, please contact Marcie Handy at 801-537-9081. ✤

2005 Legislation Affects State Agencies and Employees

The 2005 Legislature appropriated $385 million of new ongoing funds to state programs, an increase of 10.3%, including an additional $90 million for transportation infrastructure. The Legislature used an additional $300 million in one-time surplus money for buildings, transportation, and for appropriations to the State's rainy day funds.

Among the highest priorities were social services, education, and economic development. Specifically, legislators approved a $159 million (7%) increase for Health and Human Services, and added $143 million (6%) to public education, $54 million (5%) to higher education, and $23 million (12%) to economic development. In addition, legislators deposited $34.4 million into the State's two rainy day funds—$10.4 million from General Fund revenue and $24 million from Uniform School Fund revenue.

In addition to these appropriations, the Legislature also implemented the following changes that may be of interest to agencies:

➤ Implemented several government restructuring bills, including a bill that creates a new agency to oversee IT services of the State (HB 109), one that creates a new office to oversee state economic development (HB 318), one that expands the oversight of the Department of Administrative Services to include Human Resource Management (HB 319), and one that creates a new office to oversee public lands policy issues (SB 239);

➤ Created 5 new restricted funds and 1 new enterprise fund;

➤ Clarified that an agency authorized to make administrative rules is also authorized to amend or repeal those rules (SB 101);

➤ Created a tax reform task force (SB 153) and;

➤ Changed the percentage of tobacco revenue deposited into the Tobacco Settlement Restricted Account and increased the annual appropriation from the Tobacco Settlement Restricted Account to the Children's Health Insurance Pool (HB 114).

In employee-related action, the Legislature appropriated a 2.5% COLA and a one or two step Market Comparability Adjustment to employees whose benchmark job is 15% or more below market, effective the pay period beginning July 2 (pay date is July 29); and funded the state's portion of increases in health and dental insurance premiums. The Legislature also passed HB 213 that changes the benefit regarding the use of sick leave upon retirement. HB 213 retains the current unused sick leave program as program I with some changes, and creates program II for sick and converted sick leave accrued after December 31, 2005. In addition, legislators passed HB 173, which modifies the benefit coverage for the surviving spouse of a state employee whose death occurs in the line of duty.

For more information on Market Comparability Adjustments and HB 213, visit DHRM's Web site at www.dhrm.state.ut.us. You can access enrolled copies of final legislation on the Legislature's Web site at www.le.state.ut.us. ❖
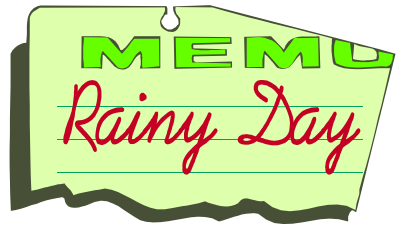
Chart of Accounts, Budget Structure Will Change

As part of the upgrade to the FINET accounting system, we will see a new organization structure, a new budget structure, and new cost accounting codes. At the March 24 Budget and Accounting Officers meeting, Larry Simpson gave a presentation to illustrate these changes. A PDF version of the presentation is posted on the Division of Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/quest/act.htm.

PREVIEW!
OF THINGS TO COME

In preparation for the changes, departments should now be thinking about how you want to convert your organization to the new structure and how you would use cost codes. Finance will begin entering the organization codes in the new Advantage FINET by January 2006.

If you have questions about the information in the presentation, contact Larry at 801-538-3092 or lsimpson@utah.gov. ❖

Finance List Servers Have Been Upgraded

The Division of Finance has recently upgraded our list servers, and as a result the Web addresses for joining any of the lists have changed.

To sign up for one of our list servers, go to www.finance.utah.gov. Mouse over the *Services* button on the left; then mouse over *E-mail Notification Lists* at the bottom of the next menu, and click on the name of the list you want to join. To join, type your e-mail address and name, and click on the *Submit* button.

List servers currently available are State Accounting System (FINET), Payroll System, Finance Data Warehouse, Advantage Financial Interfaces, FineLine Newsletter, Travel Update Newsletter, and Finance Training.

Please note that the list servers are not set up to accept replies from you. The sign-up page for each list server gives the name and e-mail address of someone to contact if you have questions regarding information related to the list server, or if you have trouble subscribing to the list. ❖

Contact the Division of Finance

Division Receptionist
801-538-3082

Payroll
801-538-3056

Data Warehouse
801-538-3530

FINET Help Desk
801-538-9690

Financial Reporting
801-537-9263

Disbursements
801-538-3200

Office Address
Room 2110 State Office Building
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-1031

Web Site: www.finance.utah.gov

Finance Staff Changes Will Not Affect Customer Service

Listed below is a summary of staff changes in the Division of Finance since the first of the year. Although you may not be talking to or working with the same Finance employees you have dealt with in the past, you can still expect the same high quality of customer service the division has always provided.

Call On Us!

★ Jason Nielsen replaced Marcie Handy as Manager of Financial Reporting. You can contact him at 801-537-9263 or jnielsen@utah.gov.

★ Marcie Handy is now the Assistant State Comptroller. She replaces John Reidhead. You can contact Marcie at 801-538-1678 or mhandy@utah.gov.

★ John Reidhead is the new Assistant Director of Finance. You can contact him at 801-538-3102 or jreidhead@utah.gov.

★ Julia Wilkins is the new Financial Information Systems Trainer. You can contact her at 801-538-9626 or jawilkins@utah.gov.

★ Henry Johnston is the new Fixed Asset Accountant. He replaces Dave Byg, who retired in December. You can contact Henry at 801-538-3129 or hjohnston@utah.gov.

★ Javier Paz is a new Accounts Payable Auditor. You can contact him at 801-538-3106 or jpaz@utah.gov.

If you are not sure who you need to talk to in the Division of Finance, call our receptionist at 801-538-3082 for assistance. ✤

Frequently Asked Question from FINET Help Desk

Q I was going to process a P-card (Purchasing card) PV3 in FINET, but I think that the amount has already posted. Can I just delete it?

A Agencies are charged for P-card items on an IAT. The PV3 is just a convenience that we provide so agencies can move the cost from the default account to other coding block strings.

If you are satisfied with the codes used on the IAT to post the expenditure for your agency, just delete the PV type 3 entry that is on Document Listing (SUSF). These entries will have a prefix of *5P*.

If you wish to move the money from the default account used, enter the desired information, starting with line 2. You can then enter as many lines as it takes to spread out the costs for your agency. However, **do not** change the information on line 1.

This same procedures also applies to the T-card (Travel card) charges that post in FINET.

If you have questions about working with expenditures made on a Purchasing card or a Travel card, contact the FINET Help Desk at 801-538-9690. ✤

April Calendar

FINET Schedule

April 8   FINET open; February monthend

Payroll Training

Computer-based training on the Payroll System is available on the Division of Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/training/courses.htm.

Click on the course names below to view the course descriptions or to access the on-line courses.

FINET Classroom Training

April 26   Purchasing Lab; 1 – 4 p.m.

April 27   Disbursing Lab; 1 – 4 p.m.

April 28   Internal Transactions Lab; 1 – 4 p.m.

FINET On-Line Courses

FINET System Navigation, FINET Overview, Employee Reimbursements, Purchasing and Disbursing, Cost Accounting, Grant Accounting, Revenues and Receivables, Internal Transactions, and Fixed Assets

Call to Add Your Name to Waiting List for These Classes

Budget Control, Grant Accounting Lab, Project Accounting, FINET Inventory, On-line Inquiries, and Fixed Assets Lab

FINET Help Desk

Call 801-538-9690 to resolve immediate questions about using FINET.

Reservations

To reserve your spot in any class offered this month or to add your name to our waiting list for classes not offered this month, call 801-538-3082. We will notify you when the class is scheduled. If you make reservations and cannot attend, please notify us as soon as possible so we can make your spot available to someone else.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodation should call 801-538-3082 a week before the class to request reasonable accommodation.

Read descriptions of all our courses and link to on-line courses at:
www.finance.utah.gov/training/courses.htm.